

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend the paragraph ¶[0005] of the specification as follows:

[0001] Figure 1 illustrates a conventional chat system 100. In the chat system 100 depicted in Figure 1, elements 110 and 140 represent chat client devices physically embodied as a server, a personal computer (PC), a personal digital assistant (PDA), a cellphone or other like computing device. Examples of capable non-personal computer devices include Blackberry devices (available at www.blackberry.com) and AOL which provides Instant Messaging (IM) service for cellphones (<http://mymobile.aol.com/portal/im/index.html>). Elements 110 and 140 need not represent equivalent devices (e.g., need not both be personal computers), as long as each is capable of providing the infrastructure of a chat client. Generally, devices must have the ability to accept chat input, and to display chat output. Software providing the chat function for devices 110 and 140 may be resident locally, or may be provided as a service by a remote server (not shown). Remote servers providing such software may be different for different clients (e.g., devices 110 and 140 may be served by different remote software servers). As shown in Figure 1, chats in progress result in text transcripts 120 and 150 that generally provide an indicator of the source of a chat statement (e.g., a nickname for whomever entered the statement), and a textual transcript of the chat statement itself. These are often provided in a window that maintains the sequential nature of the interchange, and provides the visual frame associating all the messages. Elements 110, 140 and a network-based chat service 180 are shown interconnected via a communications network 170 which may comprise a single network, or a set of interconnected networks including links which may be wireless, wireline, broadband and narrowband, and may include the Internet in general. Chat system 100 additionally include elements 130 and 160 that let chat clients speak to one another via network 170 in a manner much like the experience provided by a telephone call. Elements 130 and 160 particularly enable a client to speak to the other chat client, and hear what the other chat client has said. An example of an audio-capable client device is a personal computer with a microphone and speaker either built in or added on. In addition to the

basic textual chat system described above, an audio-capable system requires software for interfacing to the speaker and microphone, encoding and decoding the audio data, a protocol for exchanging the audio data between client devices, and a network 170 with sufficient capacity and bandwidth to send and receive audio data at a rate consistent with with spoken conversation. It should be understood that conventional chat systems treat audio and textual data differently. While transcripts 120 and 150 provide a chronological history of the textual messages exchanged in the chat session, they do not include audio data. Audio data is sent from the originating client, and played at the receiving client as it would during a telephone call that was not being recorded.